

# MERCATOR:

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## Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

### CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British Trade*, &c.

From **Thursday, April 1. to Saturday, April 3. 1714.**

**T**HE Reasons of the French Rivalling us in our Woollen-Manufactures are laid down in the last *MERCATOR* to be Three.

1. Our foolish prohibiting our Trade with France in time past, when our Manufactures were admitted there, and when their own Manufactures were in their Infancy, and would never without that Folly of ours have risen as they have since done.

2. Our refusing or delaying to open a Commerce for our Woollen-Manufactures in France, although a Treaty is made for it, which takes off all the Duties upon our Woollen Goods to the Rate of Ten per Cent. Broad-Cloth and Serges only excepted.

3. Our Neglect of our Ports in the Article of Exporting our Wool, by which the French are supply'd with Wool, and enabled to work in their Manufactures with the greater ease.

In the last *MERCATOR* it was positively asserted, that the removing these Causes was the way, and the only way to prevent the French Rivalling us in our Manufactures. This remains to be spoken farther to,

1. As to our prohibiting our own Manufactures, it is true, it cannot be said that we now expressly Prohibit our Goods going into France, the Trade being opened by the Treaty as to the general Liberty of Exportation. But it is most true, that we were the first that made a Prohibition of Trade with France, and thereby first shut our selves quite out, and by that Prohibition the French were not encouraged only to, but even under a necessity of falling in on the Manufacturing of Wool among themselves, and of supplying themselves by their own Labour as well as they could. If this has improved them in the Trade, and in the Art of Making, as well as the Method of Vending their own Woollen-Manufactures, and taught them to imitate our Sorts of Goods, if this has put their Wits on the Tenters to supply themselves with Wool from all Parts of the World as well as from England and Ireland, they are not to be blamed, nor we to be excused.

And indeed it will be matter of Amusement to future Ages to hear the Accounts History or Tradition must give of this Age, and how our People have been more eager to keep our own Manufactures from the French than our Wool; and that while the Laws against Exporting the Wool have been severe enough, yet our own People concur in the Conveying out our Wool

to the French at the same time that they are Clamouring for keeping up the Laws which prevent our sending thither our Woollen-Manufactures. This is the most preposterous Thing that ever was heard of in the World, and yet is so plain in the Fact, that it cannot be deny'd. But of this by and by.

2. The second Breach of our National Prudence in respect to Trade has been in our present Conduct, viz. Our refusing or delaying to open a Commerce for our Manufactures in France, although a Treaty is made for it, which makes way for the Entrance and Sale of the said Woollen-Manufactures in that Country, and takes off all the Exorbitant Duties which were laid upon them there, even back to the Tarriff of 1664. and to the low Duties of Ten per Cent. Two Species, (viz.) Broad-Cloth and Serges only excepted.

That this is the most preposterous Step that ever was taken by a Trading Manufacturing Nation as we are, whose Business is Trade, and whose Wealth and Greatness is derived from Trade, has been at large discussed and explained in these Papers, and need not be farther enlarged upon.

No Nation but ours ever take such absurd Steps. It is the Business of every Trading Nation in the World to prompt and push on the Sale of their own Goods, and extend them into all Parts of the World where any Vent can be had for them, and every Nation but ours do pursue that Rule in their general Practice. But we are Embark'd in such a Cause as runs us upon the most absurd Methods of Trade that ever were heard of, (viz.) That to preserve our Commerce we should keep our Manufactures at home, and to keep the French from improving and encreasing their Woollen-Manufactures; we refuse to let ours be sold among them, or to have the high Duties laid on them in France be taken off, the doing of which would give us occasion to fill France with our Manufactures, and ruin all their own. Again, in order to encourage Navigation and encrease our Shipping, and the Number of our Seamen, all which is an Encrease to the Wealth and Strength of the Nation, we appear desirous to sell our Manufactures and East-India Goods, our Plantation-Goods and Turkey-Goods all at home, and let the Dutch not only fetch them here in their own Ships, but carry them to France for us, and thereby deprive our selves of the Freight and other Profits of the French Trade, make the Dutch the universal Merchants, and also the Carriers of Europe.





To the eternal Reproach of our Nation, this is the present Temper of the Age, and we are told in Print every Day, that it is better that the Dutch should carry out Goods to France for us, than that we should carry them thither Ourselves. The Emissaries of Foreigners fill our Peoples Mouths with these Arguments, and Foreigners turn Authors here, and write Pamphlets to prompt these absurd Things among us. Such Fools we are in our own Affairs, and so easily are we managed, and made Properties of our encroaching Neighbours.

Nor will this unaccountable Negligence of Ours more amaze our Posterity than the sordid trifling Reasons which we give for it, or rather which are given to us, to draw us into such gross Delusions, as particularly, that we do this for fear lest the French should pour in upon us a Glut of their Goods in return for Ours, and Overbalance us, and yet they cannot deny but that the Power is, by the Treaty, left in our own Hands to render that impossible, for that we may, at any time hereafter, lay such farther Duties on French Goods, if we see them come in too fast, as shall effectually Cheque the Glut of their Importation, and this without any Breach of our Articles with France, provided only that we make the same Addition upon other Goods of like Quality from other Countries, and the French at the same time, are tied up from making any Addition to the Duties on our Goods in France.

It will be difficult to persuade Posterity, that our People ever heard these things, or that they had any knowledge of the particulars, otherwise they will think it was impossible they could be thus Imposed upon.

But when they shall hear again, that our Foreigners here, who are turn'd Authors and printing Advocates in this scandalous Cause, have had the Assurance to tell our People in their Libels, that altho' the French were to give us a Bounty for the bringing in our Manufactures into France, that yet we ought not to do it; when they shall hear this, I say, what will they conclude, but that this was a time when the English Nation was to be Bubbled and Imposed upon more than ever their Fathers before them were, or their Children after them can be.

One would be astonished, to hear with what Face these new Advocates for a foreign Interest appear, and persuade us, that to enrich Ourselves, we must let the Dutch have our Trade, that to encrease Our Navigation, we must employ the Dutch Shipping, and that to encourage Our Poor, we must let the Dutch eat the Bread out of their Mouths, as if we were not to be trusted with Our own Trade, and that for fear of giving it away to the French were under a Necessity of giving it away to the Dutch.

This has been of kin to an Argument lately used in the Case of the English keeping Possession of Dunkirk

Undemolished, and having it annex'd to the Crown of England, to which some People, having nothing else to object, have said with more Boldness than Concern for England's good, that we were not to be trusted with it.

This was a Saying, which, if it had been true, was fitter for any one to say of us, than for us to say of Ourselves; but we were taught to say, as those that Instructed us Commanded, without any regard to the Honour, Reputation, and Interest of Our own Country, and we know who taught us; even the very Saying itself, may tell us who it came from.

Now for the Dutch to say, they would not trust us with Dunkirk Undemolished, might have some Sense in it, tho' not much Gratitude or Justice, but for us to say of Ourselves, that we were not fit to be trusted with it, had much less of Justice in it than of Party, and, had it been Just, was yet grossly Unnatural.

Just thus it is in Trade, being embark'd with the Dutch in other things, we are taught to say now in their behalf, that we are not fit to be trusted with our own Trade, but the Dutch must drive it for us; we must not send Our Goods to France, but the Dutch must be the Carriers: As if we had no Shipping or Seamen of our own to Employ, no Stocks to Launch out, and go to Market Ourselves, but the Dutch must have the Profit of the Sale, and of the Commission.

These are the Reasons why the French go on with Success in their Woollen Manufactures, and till these are removed, how can we expect any other.

## From the Custom-House.

Exported to France in One Day,  
March 24.

- \* 6 Spanish Cloths
- 100 Serges
- 4250 yards Flannel
- 36 dozen Calve-Skins
- 30 C. Leather
- 13 Bags Cotton-Wooll
- 3408 lb. Ditto Wooll
- 6 lb. Wrought Silk Hose
- 2 C. Block-Tin
- 60000 Lanthorn-Leaves
- 8500 Horn Plates
- 2 Pictures
- 1800 Pieces Glass Wares
- 1000 Canes
- 3 Ton Fustick
- 14 C. Red-Wood